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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the teaching practices of one Lakota teacher in a South Dakota reservation high school. The research was part of a larger study that compared and contrasted the classroom style of Indian and non-Indian teachers. This study examined the teacher's use of narrative as an instructional strategy and her efforts at encouraging students to think critically and reflect on personal beliefs and perspectives. The teacher worked to establish relationships with her students and enable them to identify personal beliefs, perspectives, and values. The learning community she created provided students with the necessary preparation for college and the ability to think critically. Data collection involved participant observation and teacher interviews over 3-weeks within the teacher's junior and senior level literature classes. Results indicated that the teacher routinely used narratives and stories to create a context for discussion, share personal feelings, clarify class material, and communicate her expectations of the students. She encouraged discussion of abstract concepts by engaging her students in critical thinking and personal reflection. Her lessons reflected strategies used by other effective teachers. (Contains 58 references.) (Author/SM)

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Classroom Relationships:
The Narratives of a Lakota High School Teacher

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Abstract

This paper examines and describes the teaching practices of one Lakota teacher in a South Dakota reservation high school. It examines her use of narrative as an instructional strategy, and her efforts at encouraging students to think critically and reflect on personal beliefs and perspectives. Date were gathered through participant observation and interviews over a three week period from the teacher's junior and senior level literature classes. She routinely uses narratives and stories to create a context for discussion, share personal feelings, clarify class material, and communicate her expectations of students. This paper provides a representation of how she encouraged discussion of abstract concepts by engaging students in critical thinking and personal reflection. Her lessons are presented in a culturally congruent way that engages students in learning and discussion. In addition, her lessons reflective of strategies used by effective teachers. Although this paper focuses on the practices of one American Indian teacher, it provides evidence of the importance of sharing ideas and concepts through story, when teaching students whose cultural history supports the use of oral narrative.

Classroom Relationships: The Narratives of a Lakota High School Teacher

The interrelationship between cultural traditions, social relationships, environments, and "what makes us want to learn, with whom, and on what basis are all facets" (Eckermann, 1994, p. 27) of classroom interaction. "Teachers, like the students, bring understandings, concepts, explanations, and interpretations to the classroom that result from their experiences in their homes, families, and community cultures" (Banks, 1993, p. 12). Through the sharing of experiences and perspectives, students and teachers can be motivated to share, explore, and seek alternative explanations and interpretations. Classrooms that support this interdependent focus must be acknowledged and valued as significant for learning both socially and cognitively. Furthermore, "to ignore group membership is to deny an important part of the individual ... [and] can result in the very inequities that are to be avoided" (Ferdman, 1991, p. 96). For students to "feel like masters of their thinking" (Freire, 1970/1996, p. 199), we must work toward an understanding of what it means for teachers and students to be co-constructors in the classrooms.

Classroom communities that reflect diverse cultures, groups, perspectives, and epistemologies are important to study in order to find ways that support democratic education. The "nation's ability to embrace and enhance the talents of those who have long struggled for voice and educational opportunity" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 30) obliges acknowledgment. Discussions of empowering education, democratic education, and critical pedagogy (Banks, 1993; McLaren, 1995; Shor, 1993) are among the topics on education, teaching practice, and multicultural education that require active research and reflection on teaching practices. These theoretical perspectives are useful in the identification of ideas, categories, and constructions, however, the actual practice of teaching in such a multi-layered context as classrooms benefits from research in specific communities. The study of differences, particularly teachers' practices, is important since the teacher is leader, moderator, facilitator, and discussant in the classroom, and as McLaren (1995) notes, "difference is always a product of history, culture, power, and ideology ... [and] differences occur *between* and *among* groups"(p. 99).

Differences are reflected not only among students, but also in the teachers that lead the classrooms. The critical questions of how and by what means do effective teachers establish a community relationship built on an appreciation of difference within their classrooms necessitates investigation. Furthermore, do the most effective teachers routinely work toward student understanding, and are students challenged to reflect on situations, interpret from their own perspectives, and examine values as part of their class work? The structuring of school relationships that value respect and caring is a vital component of the social construction of knowledge and understanding, and central to feelings of belonging and affiliation (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Friere, 1996; Witherall & Noddings, 1991).

Research that examines the ways relationships are constructed in classrooms are particularly important for American Indian and Indigenous communities whose primary cultural focus is interdependent relationships as opposed to individual achievement (Delgado-Gaitan & Trueba, 1991; Greenfield & Cocking, 1994; Nieto, 1996). Differences in teacher practices, interaction patterns and relationships which reflect such constructions need to be identified in order to propose concrete methods to assist teachers in ways that support student learning. In addition, the work of McAlpine, Eriks-Brophy, and Crago (1996) suggest a theory of schooling experiences that account for success in American Indian communities includes cultural explanations "of what people do (their interaction patterns) but also explanations based on their personal and collective histories for why they choose to act in certain ways (their beliefs)" (p. 390). Studies that focus on the teaching practices of American Indian teachers and the relationships they establish with students are noticeably limited or absent with a few exceptions (Erickson & Mohatt, 1988; Philips, 1983; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

There are many levels and aspects to the multi-layered context of classrooms. The focus of this paper is one Lakota teacher's classroom and her use of narrative for self-disclosure, affording students the opportunity to think critically, establishing relationships with her students, and enabling them to identify personal beliefs, perspectives, and values. It describes the practices of a Lakota teacher and her efforts to create a learning community that provides students with the

necessary preparation for college and the ability to think critically. The primary purpose is to examine in what ways the teacher's use of storytelling and narrative contributes to the culturally relevant construction of community and interpersonal relationships with the students she serves. Finding a way to make cultural processes and differences explicit and accessible to teachers was an important focus.

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspectives that guided this study are derived from social interaction and interpersonal relations (Cole, 1996; Gergen, 1994; Goffman, 1958; Goody, E., 1995), narrative research (Bruner, 1986/1996; Ong, 1982; Chafe, 1990), and American Indian and multicultural education (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987; Heath, 1982; Philips, 1983; Scollon & Scollon, 1981).

The notion that social interaction is an underlying evolutionary source of human intelligence and that relationships between individuals support higher mental functions has been the topic of research for a number of years (Cole, 1996; Cole, John-Steiner, Scribner, & Souberman, 1978; Friere, 1996; Goody, 1996). Vygotsky's effort in "charting developmental changes is, in part, to show the psychological implications of the fact that humans are active, vigorous participants in their own existence and that at each stage of development children acquire the means by which they can competently affect their world and themselves" (John-Steiner & Souberman, in Cole et al., 1978). In this perspective, "literacy learning takes place in a social environment through interactional exchanges in which what is learnt is to some extent a joint construction of teacher and student" (Cook-Gumperz, 1986, p. 8).

Interdependent relationships and sense of community are fundamental to social interaction in many American Indian communities, and relationships form the foundation between individuals. Oral tradition and storytelling is the principal means used for connecting with others (Cajete, 1994; Hymes, 1981; Swann, 1992/1994), and as Ong (1982) notes, "primary orality fosters personality structures that in certain ways are more communal and externalized, and less introspective than those of literate cultures" (p. 69). Further, the use of orality as a crucial form of communication is not a deficit mode in comparison with the so called literate traditions (Goody, 1987; Ong, 1982),

and has been well-documented. In fact, "we need to see orality as an energetic and distinct set of ways of learning and communicating, not simply as an incomplete and imperfect use of mind awaiting the invention of literacy" (Egan, 1987, p. 454). One of the reasons for studying oral traditions is that "orality entails a set of powerful and effective mental strategies, some of which ... have been attenuated and undervalued in many aspects of our Western cultures and educational systems" (Egan, 1987, p. 448). "Within American education there is a wide spread bias against the use of narrative as a communicative medium" (Scollon & Scollon, 1981, p. 6). Studies that focus on American Indian teachers from the perspective of classroom practices and the relationships they establish with students are noticeably limited with few exceptions (Erickson & Mohatt 1988; Philips, 1983, Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

An understanding of the significance and importance of narrative in education, not to mention as a facet of daily life, is addressed in many disciplines from linguistics, to historical and psychological research, and to socio-anthropological studies (Bruner, 1996). Many definitions, interpretations, and understandings of narrative exist, and may be equal to the unlimited number of narratives themselves. Havelock (1986) defines narrative as inviting attention since it is the "most pleasurable form that language, spoken or written, takes, [and] its content is not ideology but action, and those situations which action creates" (p. 75). Bruner's (1996) definition describes, "narrative, as a mode of thinking, as a structure for organizing our knowledge, and as a process for the vehicle of education" (p. 119). Heath (1986) maintains that recounts, eventcasts, accounts and stories are "narrative forms [that] bring to consciousness past or imagined experience and require gestalt-level processes of linking similarities and dissimilarities across space and time (p. 88). Within social contexts, multiple definitions and interpretations are possible, particularly within specific oral traditions where the embedded cultural philosophy and viewpoint are vital to an understanding of the narrative.

Through narratives, we are able to understand communities and contexts as "cultural resources that serve such purposes as self-identification, self-criticism, and social solidification" (Gergen, 1994, p. 188). Narrative supports the organization and structure of relationships and

combines layers of experience into a multi-faceted construction. "It is the very context dependence of narrative accounts that permits cultural negotiation which, when successful, makes possible such coherence and interdependence as a culture can achieve" (Bruner, 1991, p. 18). "The most important thing narratives can give us" regarding cultural expression and mind, isn't a record of the world, but rather a creation "according to its own mix of cultural and individual expectations" (Chafe, 1990, p. 81). Narrative is "the mode of thinking and feeling that helps children (indeed people generally) create a version of the world in which, psychologically they can envisage a place for themselves—a personal world" (Bruner, 1996, p. 39). Narratives help to place the information in a familiar context and organize the material, and they have the ability to link across space and time. These aspects and understandings of the role of narrative are important considerations in this research and the construction of classroom communities which support multiple perspectives.

Classrooms are multi-layered environments which deal in processes (John-Steiner, Panofsky & Smith 1994), and "the world of face-to-face interaction is a world of considerable complexity" (Scollon & Scollon, 1981, p. 5), and dynamic social relationships. Narrative is particularly well-suited to explicating these processes, and can encourage the development of a shared knowledge base and contribute to a respect for the thoughts, feelings, and interests of others (Beck, Walters, & Francisco, 1942; Joe, 1994). Previous studies have identified verbal and non-verbal interaction patterns, and the use of personal and oral narrative (Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Greenfield & Cocking, 1994; Philips, 1983; Scollon & Scollon, 1981; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) as significant features and aspects of American Indian classrooms.

Storytelling and narrative play a significant role in the oral cultures and traditions of many American Indian and Indigenous communities (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987; Hymes, 1981; Swann, 1992/1994; Ong, 1982). Scollon and Scollon (1981) note, "Athabascan[s] oral narrative constitutes an art of the highest development ... and have invested the best of their artistic energies in the education of children, the management of their social relations, and the entertainment of their elders through the performance of oral narrative" (p. 6). "Oral cultures engage the emotions of their members by making the culturally important messages event-laden, by presenting characters and

their emotions in conflict ... in short, by building the messages into stories" (Egan, 1987, p. 455). This is a way of strengthening relationships and connections with others, and it establishes each individual's place within the context of tribal history and multiple generational relations.

Elaine Jayner (1994) suggests that in American Indian communities, "the circumstances that prompt a particular telling are as much a part of the story's significance as the details of the plot (p. 424). Stories are used for instruction, the sharing of cultural examples, and as a means for building familial or community connections. Stories or speeches are "like a gaff hook reaching out over a distance and becoming one with another person who is hooked" (Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer, 1990, p. ix) by the story. It becomes a way of connecting with others through feeling or affect, a personal way of engaging someone in process (Chafe, 1990). In general, American Indian community members are encouraged to reflect on personal experience, contribute through self-disclosure when appropriate, and use narrative to relate personal "story" as a way of increasing dialogue and interaction with others (Braid, 1996; Chafe, 1990; Egan, 1987; Heath, 1982). "Knowledge must be passed on in such a way that it maximizes relevance to the learner and minimizes the threat to individual autonomy and flexibility" (Scollon & Scollon, 1981, p. 105).

Discussions of everyday life such as work, personal knowledge, and learning are important for providing students with the opportunity for social interaction and community relationships. Furthermore, in schools "education cannot be treated as an institution separate from communities" (Saravia-Shore, 1992, p. 73); It must be an integral part of the curricula based on the American Indian community it serves (p. 74). Lakota individuals, particularly teachers, have a responsibility to the community and to themselves to improve, learn, educate, and prepare for their societal role as elder—a person who interacts with wisdom and knowledge for the next generations (Young Bear & Theisz, 1994). Furthermore, in research on teacher's classroom behavior, Downs, Javidi, and Nussbaum (1988) found that the use of narratives, humor, and self-disclosure may be an effective tool in helping students to understand the material. Holladay (1984) suggests that effective teachers engage in narrative activity more often than less effective teachers.

Method

Case study design

For this study, a case design method was used in order to investigate "a contemporary phenomena within its real-life context" (Yin, 1994, p. 13). Case study is a methodological approach that provides the opportunity to look closely at a phenomena, and "involve[s] systematically gathering enough information about a particular person, social setting, event, or group to permit the researcher to effectively understand how [they] operate or function" (Berg, 1998, p. 212). A further consideration in the choice of the case study method was an interest in how the "workings of particular processes within a classroom setting are illuminated (Scott, 1997). The purpose is to look closely at a particular trait or characteristic of one teacher's style, and provide an exemplary profile of one teacher's practices. This has been termed "intrinsic case study" (Berg, 1998; Stake, 1995) since it illustrates a particular characteristic, issue, or problem. The intent of an intrinsic case study is "not to understand or test abstract theory or to develop new theoretical explanations; instead, the intention is to better understand intrinsic aspects of the particular" (Berg, 1998, p. 216) case under study. This has also been defined as "intensity-sampling" where the purpose is to select an information rich case for in-depth study (Patton, 1990, p. 182).

Personal context

The author is a researcher and faculty member in a university setting, and the paper is based on a dissertation study that contrasts and compares the classroom style of Indian and non-Indian teachers. Originally, my research interest began in the global framework of exploring ways in which communities support collaborative and interdependent relationships. Philosophical differences are categorized in terms of Western Euroamerican and Indigenous traditions or individualistic and interdependent traditions (Eisner, 1985; Gardner, 1983; Greenfield & Cocking, 1994). I discovered a wide range of Indigenous communities that support participative social interaction that include many American Indian communities. I became very interested in knowing more about Indian communities and I focused on Lakota traditions and language.

I began my dissertation research in 1995, with an initial visit to South Dakota. My family

had moved from Illinois to the south-eastern portion of the state in the early 1900s and several branches of the family remained in the area. My mother's sister introduced me to a friend who was working for the Catholic Church on a Lakota reservation in the western part of the state, and during the months of research I was able to live with her. Through my family, church membership, and the connections with individuals on the reservation that I made in 1995 and 1996, I established relationships with the local school district and teachers so that I might observe and participate in the high school classes.

Writing as a non-Indian, I have tried to be aware of the Western traditions that I have been raised with, use reflection to gain understanding and awareness of personal perspectives and biases, and to be conscious of the power relations inherent in this type of research. I have worked throughout this project to continually reflect on personal perspectives and beliefs, and I have made every attempt not to romanticize nor patronize the participants in this study. I hope to present instead the teaching practices of one master teacher who uses narrative to create a context, provide opportunities for her students that encourage critical thinking, and present content in a culturally congruent way.

Community and high school context

The community in which this research was conducted is on one of the six Lakota reservations in South Dakota. Although it may be the largest in land base, community members have had the greatest amount of cultural disruption, particularly over the past 50 years. This is due to several factors: 1) the forced the relocation of Lakota people living near the Missouri River in the 1950s; 2) the white community that "accepted" them who were descendants of settlers from the late 1800s to early 1990s; 3) the land base of the reservation which has a large portion owned by non-Indians and their ownership "checkerboards" the reservation; and 4) the wide variation between those considered traditional Lakota who are first language speakers, and those that are considered assimilated. These factors contribute to a greater degree of difference among community members than may be present on other Lakota reservations.

The high school is relatively small with approximately 300 students, and students live in

town (population around 3000) and the surrounding rural communities. The school district and curriculum is supervised by the state of South Dakota and the reservation tribal government. Some of the students are fluent in Lakota language, and these students generally live in the smaller rural communities. There is a wide variation in language proficiency among students, however, and with the passing of the Indian language act, the tribal government initiated Lakota language study for grades one through twelve at the beginning of the 1995 school year. All of the teachers that teach Lakota language are Lakota and are generally first language speakers, however, the majority of teachers at the high school are non-Indian. All of the classes in the high school are relatively small with between 6 and 20 students.

Participants

In the original dissertation study, twelve separate classrooms with six Indian and six non-Indian teachers, were observed and data gathered. All of the teachers have a South Dakota teaching credential, and were chosen based on their experience, and the subject and grade level(s) they teach. The subjects are English, social science, and Lakota language, and the classes were similar in that the discussion was in English, and the content pertained to culture, society, and language and literature. Of the twelve classrooms, three Indian and three non-Indian were chosen as principal sources of data based on intensity sampling strategies consisting of "information-rich cases that manifest the phenomena of interest intensely, but not extremely" (Patton, 1990, p. 182). In addition, as noted by Erickson and Mohatt (1982), this is not meant to be a study of an ideal cultural type of "Indian" teacher's practices or ways of interacting in American Indian classrooms.

From the data analysis, the original study indicated the use of narrative was a prevalent feature of the Indian teachers classrooms and was part of an instructional and culturally relevant teaching strategy. For purposes of this paper, one of the Lakota teachers stands out as an exemplary model, and is an example of an "intrinsic case" and "critical case sampling" in which it is possible to make a point "important in the scheme of things" (Patton, 1990, p. 174).

Data sources and collection

Data were gathered from a variety of sources: participant-observation in classrooms, teacher

interviews, and extant data sources. Data were collected from the six teachers' classrooms in the high school over a period of six weeks, and from the community over a period twenty weeks. Additional data supporting the use of narrative in American Indian communities for the education of children were obtained from previous research in American Indian communities and an analysis of Lakota oral narratives.

Participant observation in classes provided the opportunity for interaction with teachers and students in the classroom context. As with many American Indian communities where recorded information has been misused and is no longer allowed, video or tape recording of the classrooms was not permitted. However, field notes were taken during class times and transcribed that same day. This provided the opportunity for concentration on the interaction, dialogue, and actions of participants, while simultaneously limiting the amount of possible interpretation in the setting. All classroom materials were read and reviewed prior to the class discussions.

Semi-structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with all of the teachers in the study. As with the classrooms, tape recording of the interviews was not permitted. Notes were taken during the interviews, and the statements were read back to the participant's for clarification and accuracy. Artifacts and extant data were collected from several sources: school and institutional guidelines and philosophy, classroom materials used during lessons, and community demographics.

Data analysis

Several approaches to data analysis were utilized in order to provide a range of descriptions. A "grounded theory" approach was used (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to identify categories and exhibit patterns. In conjunction with this approach, data were analyzed using "three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). The observation and interview data gathered from the teacher's class lessons which is the focus of this paper were coded and tabulated, and charts and data displays were organized. Data sources, charts and coding provided the opportunity to describe and identify the teacher's perspectives and methods of instruction. In addition, quotations from the teacher's interview, class

lectures, narratives and interactions with students were "selected to capture the context and support conclusions so that readers might judge the transferability of the meaning and the interpretation of the data" (Collinson, 1993. p. 75).

Findings And Discussion

This section presents the teacher's philosophy of teaching and the classroom narratives she uses to create a context for the class material, and share personal opinions, beliefs and perspectives. The teacher's narratives help to show her ability to establish relationships with students and her expectations of them.

Paula Morrow (pseudonym) teaches advanced placement English literature in the ninth through twelfth grades at the high school, and she has been teaching in the high school for twelve years. She began her career thirteen years ago, and has a bachelor's degree and teaching credential from a South Dakota university. She was raised in the community, is of Lakota heritage[1], and some of her family still resides in the area. During the interview, she says that she has moved quite often and lived on and off the reservation. She finds it a blessing that for the past twelve years her children have been able to grow up with the same friends. "I can't imagine that. I have seen their friends grow up." Although she tells me that she does not personally participate in Lakota ceremonies, she is supportive of cultural traditions and assists family members in their participation. She has a working knowledge of Lakota language.

Philosophy of Teaching

In the interview, Paula describes her philosophy of teaching as predominately Western in nature, and grounded in the subject and something that you want to know more about. First, "I love to read. [You have to] love your subject–love what you are doing. [It] teaches students respect for what you are doing and shows you have respect and believe it's important." She goes on to say, second, "I remember they're teenagers with all that goes with that ... and that's another thing, I don't believe you can teach because you love kids. Some kids are hard to love and I am very

[1] The degree of blood quantum of participants in this study is not addressed for reasons germane to many Indian peoples. Blood quantum are Western constructions, and although they are used to determine tribal memberships,

careful about what I say I love."

She believes that helping students understand the historical, political, and cultural context of what they are reading and discussing is critical to furthering their ability to interpret and understand the material. In her lessons, she tries to help students in a variety of ways and in the interview she describes how she accomplishes this.

> For instance, when I teach transcendentalism and we are reading Ralph Waldo Emerson, you have to know what it means to have everything in its place. [Everything] has form and order. You have to understand where Emerson was coming from. I use this example with my students. First I say, "OK guys, are all of you feeling all right.? – Yes – Are you sure? – Yes – Well, just swallow and see if everything is OK." They swallow and yes it's OK. Then I tell them to hold their hand up to their face and spit in their hand, most of them go "YUK", but a few of them do it before I say anything else. So then I tell them to lick it back up and they go "YUK", but I ask them what is the difference? A few minutes ago you just swallowed it. Now, it's out of place. That's transcendentalism.

Paula's lessons routinely contain a variety of physical, cognitive and affective strategies that help to explicate the text. She considers concrete experiences, feelings or perspectives, and student's reflections regarding the material are significant aspects of learning and routinely part of the discussion.

Classroom Context

There are twelve students in Paula's Senior English class, and she uses a variety of instructional strategies from direct instruction to collaborative groups. She says, "I give them worksheets [with discussion questions] and tell them to work in pairs. I know they are difficult, but I want students to work hard and get it themselves." When students work in groups, however, Paula allows them to choose to work alone, in pairs, and or in groups of three or more.

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many Native peoples refuse to use a numeric assessment to determine degree of "Indian-ness".

Ms. Morrow emphasizes important parts of her lectures for note-taking and repeats sentences for emphasis. She defines new or difficult vocabulary words and waits for students to write down the definitions. She sees this as important for preparing students for college work and informs them of her purpose. On several occasions, she leaves the room to go to the library to look up additional material. During one class she says, "Maybe you'll get really motivated about this and go to the library to look things up." She hopes her own example will help to generate the same interest in learning that she has, and she conveys her expectations regarding students' initiative.

There is an egalitarian structure to Paula's classroom and she does not expect anything of students that she would not do herself. On a particularly hot South Dakota day she says, "Since I'm having a pop, I'll take you over to get on." (There is a school rule that prohibits students from having pop or food in classrooms.) She conveys a personal interest in students' problems, concerns, and what they are doing. Often times students ask to speak to her privately, and she responds by stopping the lesson and going to their desk. Students greet their teacher enthusiastically at the beginning of class, appear to be conscientious regarding assignments, interested in the topic, and are attentive and punctual during class.

Ms. Morrow encourages students to think critically, support their arguments, and take notes during lectures. In a discussion of a Louise Erdrich short story, she asks questions that require students to draw conclusions, examine perspectives, and to thoughtfully reflect on the situation in the story. The following are a few of the discussion questions in Ms. Morrow's class entitled, "The Search for Truth and Meaning in 'American Horse' by Louise Erdrich".

* Why does the law not recognize individuals as competent until age 18?
* Is 18 too young? too old? Who decides who is too old or too young?
* Are you ever too OLD to make your own decisions?
* What will Buddy lose if he goes to a non-Indian home? Does that mean that non-Indians should never be allowed to take Indian children?
* What are some of the other social issues Native American writers could be addressing?

* Are there social/cultural issues that shouldn't be written about?
* What are the problems with outside intervention into family conflict? the advantages?
* When does a family lose its right to privacy?

In the interview, Ms. Morrow says that the students almost never complete all of the discussion questions since they become so interested in the different aspects, opinions, issues, and concerns that the questions generate.

Paula's stories are a source of enjoyment and a familiar topic for her students. They recognize that stories are part of her teaching lessons and they listen when she speaks. Through an analysis of the data, Paula's use of narrative in the classroom can be divided into two categories: personal and cultural. The personal narratives reflect stories of her experiences, feelings, or share her perspectives and ideas. Cultural narratives present elements of Indian and Lakota values, cultural beliefs, or traditions. Both categories of narratives typically use historical contexts to discuss current events, student issues, and critical pedagogy to explore social, cultural, and personal interpretations and perspectives. Paula Morrow uses narrative in the following ways:

1) to create a context for discussion of the material;
2) to provide the opportunity to self-disclose personal perspectives and stories;
3) to clarify the material and ask questions; and
4) to communicate her expectations of students, either explicitly or implicitly.

An overview and presentation of the narrative categories Paula uses for teaching students critical understanding of the material and establishing relationships with her students in her English literature class can be found in Table 1.

Personal Narratives

The following are three narratives from Paula Morrow's classes in which she uses personal examples to explain the material and share some of her own issues and problems with students. The first story of the "Exchange Student" indicates an awareness of her own mistakes, and is a relevant example when the class is discussing inappropriate behaviors. She says:

Do you guys remember Reuben our exchange student [from Spain]? OK, he had

> Ms. Lang and Reuben could come in and visit after school. He would listen to the Spanish students and say they sounded like a "retarded Spaniard." But I found myself doing what I ridicule other people for doing. So I would say, "BREAKFAST?", like he couldn't hear instead of speak English. Now any of you guys in Lakota, how are you learning that? Do you have a textbook and word lists on the board? Well, to a Native speaker you probably would sound funny.

In this brief narrative, she shares a personal awareness of her own lack of sensitivity and fallibility. The story conveys to students that their teacher is capable of making mistakes, and it teaches a lesson about appropriate behavior. The lesson is educational from the standpoint of an experienced adult discussing an awareness of her own behavior and relating it to the students' experience in their language class.

The Medieval "Catholic Church" is the basis for the second narrative when the class is discussing difficult piece of literature from the seventeenth century. Paula begins with a question of relevance, and contrasts her personal experience of the Church with the context of that century. She says:

> Why is [the Church] important to people? Because it provided common elements of culture. The thing about it was, it was the same from one side of the country to the other. I want you to put this in your notes. [The] Church was an extremely powerful force. Church crossed physical, cultural, language barriers. Latin was known or used everywhere the Church was. When I was a young girl, and I'm old enough to remember it being in Latin, I remember Church was mysterious when I was growing up. The priest and the alter boys faced away from you. You didn't know what they were doing bells ringing– incense burning–candles burning– solemn and quiet–and they used to do high mass which was all sung, and low mass. Imagine what it must have been? [The] Latin of the Church indicated an educated person. Church was the seat of power for the masses and the masses responded to it. The Church could be brutal in its punishment of heretics ... We're

> going to be reading someone named Chaucer–lived around 1100. Some of his characters were about the Church and he didn't portray them too well.

Ms. Morrow connects the material to the social context of the time period by saying, Latin was known by educated people, and the Church was the most powerful, constant and unifying force across cultures. She uses her personal experience with the Catholic Church as an example of how it must have felt during that time to be an uneducated person, watching a ceremony where the participants faced away from you, and spoke in a language that you did not understand. Finally, she returns to the literature, prepares students for future material, and re-emphasizes the power of the church. In this way, Paula uses her personal experience of the Church as an example that connects the material to a more familiar social context for students.

The third personal narrative takes place during a class when students are reading the Canterbury Tales. The tale they are reading describes how the character of the Doctor takes credit for healing people when, as the tale goes, God is more likely to be responsible for the healing. Ms. Morrow says, "OK let's have some fun with it ... Oh, I have a story." The students make faces and there is a slight groan. She says, "You know how I am with my stories."

> [Do you] remember this aphorism from Ben Franklin: "God heals and the doctor takes the fee." So remember when my throat was sore, well after about a week I decided to look in my own throat with a flashlight and I saw some white stuff on one of my tonsils. Well, I went to the clinic and it was really busy. So I left and I could have come back and gone to the emergency, but I didn't feel right about that. So I thought I would wait until the next day, and then, I just got better anyway. So now after we [read about] the doctor [in the Canterbury Tales], make some inferences about the time. It's easy for me to make inferences about the doctor because I have a history [with doctors]. So I wouldn't expect the same of you.

This narrative involves a sequence of four related events and provides a relevant context for the students to connect the material to their daily lives. First, Ms. Morrow begins by connecting the topic of doctors to another piece of literature previously discussed in class, the aphorism by Ben

Franklin "God heals and the doctor takes the fee". She then transitions to her personal experience of a sore throat that the students already know about and the experience of going to the Indian Health Clinic (IHC). Students are aware the IHC is routinely busy, and Paula states her feelings about not going to the emergency room when her sore throat doesn't seem to be serious enough to be classified as an emergency. Third, she relates her experience to a specific passage from the text by saying, then "I just got better anyway", implying God healed me without the doctor's interference. Finally, she tells students to make some interpretations about the text, and she expresses her expectations for students based on their existing knowledge.

Cultural Narratives

The following are three narratives from Paula's class that are classified as cultural since they draw on cultural beliefs or traditions, historical material, and current events or issues. During discussions, Ms. Morrow consciously makes connections to the present day, and she encourages her students to think about any relevance or application the material might have for them. She uses values that are represented in the text as a way for students to connect to values that might be relevant for them today. The first narrative describes bravery, loyalty, and justice in "Medieval Literature", and she tells students:

> Stop and think, what is the message and then ask yourself, is that relevant at all in 1996? Let me help you out with one. You have a hero who comes along and saves people and slays dragons. Is that relevant or irrelevant? People remember, go a little bit deeper than just the words in the poem. What this represents is the triumph of good over evil ... loyalty has its own rewards [like being] loyal to people – always on their side through thick and thin. Loyalty sometimes is relevant. You guys think about it. Is that relevant today? It's OK if you think they're irrelevant as long as you tell me why. [A student asks if they can use her examples.] Yes, I would take the loyalty one because that could be really interesting.

Values are particularly relevant for discussion since they are a part of the school and community philosophy and routinely discussed in all the classes. The Lakota virtues of respect, generosity,

wisdom, child rearing, fortitude, and bravery are significant cultural beliefs and values that are well known to students.

The second cultural narrative helps students to make connections between the difficult material they are reading and their daily lives, and this is an important aspect of Ms. Morrow's teaching. They are discussing Medieval poems, which use unfamiliar English grammar and sentence structures. Ms. Morrow tries to relate the material to something understandable to students regarding relationships. In a poem entitled "Get up and Bar the Door", a husband and wife are fighting and neither person wants to get up and lock the door. Both are very stubborn and the class reads aloud, "... if it stays open 100 years it's not going to be shut by me ..." Ms. Morrow interrupts the reading to say:

> They are at a stand off ... Now remember guys, this is a time when people fear for their safety. The door is still open and 2 men come into the house, neither the husband or wife are speaking. So the men eat the pudding the wife is making and these guys are talking about doing the couple some harm, so the husband speaks first. You know guys, when relationships start out you can't do enough for the other person– rub their back–get coffee–after about a year the individual personality surfaces and you begin to assert yourself. You guys open the door for her–pay for things. Guys, it goes the other way too. This is how this couple is with each other. They are like some older couples I know, grandparents and older couples. You guys know some people like that. One day they love you and the shirt you wear is OK and the next time it's, "Why do you wear that old thing all the time?"

Ms. Morrow begins the discussion by alluding to the couple's dangerous situational context. She then relates it to students' knowledge of relationships, and ties it to the relationship of the couple in the text. Students are familiar with relationships with girlfriends and boyfriends, as well as older couples or grandparents that they know. This draws on students' knowledge of relationships in two ways: first, the social relationships of teenagers, and second, the cultural significance and relationships of grandparents and older couples in an American Indian

community.

The third cultural narrative, "John Smith", displays many levels of thought and action, and the perspectives that are expressed are open for discussion. They are considered important in order to understand the material and appreciate the cultural context of the period in relation to current perspectives. In a discussion of the writings of John Smith, Ms. Morrow intersperses the text with viewpoints that would be relevant and understandable to her students. She places the discussion within the social history of the Puritan ethic prevalent in Virginia during 1607 and begins with a definition of bias as partiality or inclination toward a certain position.

> Some writers are very biased. John Smith was biased toward himself and against Indians ... England was brutal to the punishment of criminals: A child 8 years old would be punished as an adult for stealing a bun to eat. Ironic because they were savage and brutal ... Family member had to bring you food if you wanted to eat. Is it wrong to steal food if your children are starving? ... They were going to beat [the Puritans] for their beliefs, yet, they left England and continued to do the same things. This guy [John Smith] didn't think much of Indian people, yet, they helped him. Hard to deal with the situations that he got into. How did Smith dress? Cloth cotton, ruffles, tights, and boots. How did he see the Native Americans? Breechcloths, animal skins, moccasins, furs, tails, feathers, and painted faces. Think about the culture shock! [They] dressed so differently–seemed not as progressive. Do people that dress differently than you make you feel uncomfortable? Traditional Muslims–women stay behind their husbands–doesn't it set them apart from you? Not in a negative sense, will you make comparisons with yourself? ... One cannot forget the cultural background that John Smith came from and how unprepared he was for what he found ... Colonists saw the opposite of what they taught–not the Noble Savage that they heard about in England. Loud Indian parties–seemed like gluttony which was one of the seven deadly sins. But think about it. There were lots of tribes on the move–eating when you could–no

> preservatives. So eat it while it's there ... When you don't understand something most peoples reaction is fear, or shock, or terror, or they make fun of it ... My discussion of John Smith is more focused on helping you deal with his response. He was from a different place and did not try to be objective.

The narrative suggests several significant features and topics that are skillfully woven together by Ms. Morrow and integrated through her use of various teaching strategies. She uses direct instruction, multiple representations of content, perspective-taking, and inductive and deductive reasoning. She uses these instructional strategies to juxtapose the ethics and values of the English, the Puritans, American Indians, and the students' personal perspectives. The discussion requires students to think critically about the material from a variety of historical and cultural perspectives. An analysis of these features can be found in Table 2.

The writings of John Smith are a curriculum requirement, and during the interview Paula tells me that she would probably not use it if it wasn't required. Her discussions are aimed at helping students understand the Puritan ethic and perspective of the time that disregarded Indian ethics or philosophy. Paula uses the students' experiences of bias and racism as a topic of discussion. She is sensitive to the feelings of students concerning lines such as "the Captain ... that used the savage that was his guide as a shield", and the atrocities and abuse perpetrated on Indian peoples. She uses historical information and terminology such as "Noble Savage" to contrast misperceptions of Indians and students' personal awareness of cultural values and ethics. Her discussion incorporates the idea of difference, and then asks students to think of a time when they felt uncomfortable around someone or something that was different from themselves. Finally, she refers to the cultural degradation and abuse, and attempts to explain John Smith as a product of his times. He was a very biased writer and someone who "made himself look confident ... [but] was wrong because people read it". Paula finishes the discussion by saying, "Does anyone think John Smith was not wrong? Because I can argue either way; He was a product of his times."

This narrative provides insight into Ms. Morrow's expert use of multiple representations of content, perspective-taking, and critical literacy for engaging students in discussion. A visual

representation of these features can be found in Figure 1. It indicates in what ways Ms. Morrow incorporates abstract conceptualizations and integrates them with the students' concrete experiences. She begins the discussion with a discussion of bias indicating her view of the material, and she continues with the abstract ideas of Puritan and English philosophy and ethics. She highlights the points of discussion that address American Indian philosophy and misconceptions about Indian peoples. This area of discussion is less abstract and more familiar for students. She then asks students to reflect on their own perspectives and beliefs using concrete experience and reflective observation to make the material more relevant to their experiences. Finally, she ends the discussion by explicitly stating her own opinions, which have been implied throughout the discussion.

Discussion of the Teacher's Narratives

This paper presents findings regarding a Lakota teacher's classroom environment, and provides evidence of her use of narrative for sharing personal experience. She demonstrates the importance of narrative for integrating teaching and learning as well as presenting culturally relevant Lakota traditional values. She uses stories and narratives as a method for creating a context, self-disclosing, and communicating her expectations to students. The stories and narratives were told within a context and the teacher drew connections to something relevant for students, contextualizing meanings and reinforcing student-teacher relationships. As Witherall (1991) notes, teaching through narratives "has to do with the power of story and metaphor in offering up possibilities for human action and feeling ... The teller or receiver of stories can discover connections between self and other, penetrate barriers to understanding, and come to know more deeply the meanings of his or her own historical and cultural narrative" (p. 94).

The teacher displays expert abilities, professional knowledge and awareness of her own thinking, aspects argued to be those of an expert teacher (Woolfolk, 1998). Her classroom is the context for critical dialogue of the material, and students are encouraged to go beneath the surface of the text to understand ideology, social context, and personal consequences (Shor, 1992). Her lessons include: 1) an emphasis on understanding; 2) the ability to develop conceptual schemes,

interrelated concepts, and global relationships; 3) an awareness of general teaching strategies such as classroom management and evaluation; 4) subject-specific knowledge that she continues to enrich; 5) an understanding of the characteristics and cultural background of the learners; and 6) knowledge of the settings in which students learn (Lancy, 1993).

Similar to findings reported by Downs, Javidi, and Nussbaum (1988), the teacher's use of self-disclosure was primarily for clarifying course material, emphasizing content, and helping students organize their thoughts and perceptions. This was a significant aspect of her teaching style that allowed a place for interpersonal relationships with students, and is consistent with other classroom research indicates that when teachers treat students as individuals and express feelings, there is a greater possibility that relationships will be characterized by respect and caring (Darling-Hammond, 1997; McLaughlin, 1994). The way a teacher communicates positive expectations is another aspect of classroom communities that respect and care for students. Ms. Morrow states her positive expectations of students when she says, " So I wouldn't expect the same of you" and that she hopes they will "get motivated" and go to the library. She also communicates expectations implicitly by expecting students to think critically, have opinions, and reflect on questions for discussion.

Although Paula Morrow perceives her teaching as primarily supportive of a Western educational paradigm that exercises control over others and questions students on content, there is evidence that she uses culturally appropriate strategies that support an Indigenous paradigm as well. First, oral narratives are an important part of social interaction in this Lakota community, and this cultural congruence by the teacher within the classroom supports roles and relationships that are reflective of the community in general. Most importantly, she uses the narratives as a way of sharing her own viewpoints, perspectives, and personal challenges. As Clandinin and Connelly (1990) discovered in research on teachers' stories, the Lakota teacher's narratives helped students to perceive something of their own story in the narrative accounts, and use reflection to surface their own questions. Second, discussions of values are a significant part of the school's philosophy, cultural tradition, and this Lakota community. They are characterized by the four

Lakota virtues: respect, generosity, bravery or fortitude, and wisdom, and, in both the interview and during classroom observations, the teacher refers to them on numerous occasions.

Based on the findings of this study, the teaching practices of Paula Morrow do not differ substantially from non-Indian teachers or effective teachers in general. However, her teaching style reflects findings similar to Erickson and Mohatt's (1982) interpretation of Odawa teachers in that Paula Morrow has intuitively found ways of accommodating community principles into her teaching. She combines the use of narrative with class content to prepare students for advanced work in critical thinking, discuss affect and feeling, and she uses cultural traditions and beliefs to reinforce ethics and personal values. She skillfully integrates multiple perspectives and representations of content based on Indigenous and Western paradigms, encourages perspective-taking by her students, and uses a variety of instructional strategies to insure that students are comprehending the material.

IMPLICATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

An underlying premise of this study is that the culture of the classroom community is an important component in shaping the school experience, and that students "create meanings from school experience that they can relate to their lives" (Bruner, 1996, p. 39). Further, "the process of exchange and negotiation—this culture creating—is a feature of [the] classroom", and it is based on "an exercise in collectivity, one that depends upon the attunement of the teacher to the expressions and intents" (Bruner, 1986, p. 132) of the students and vice versa. Helping teachers to identify and support this perspective necessitates looking at the contexts of teachers work, and the strategies effective teachers use. In order to help connect teachers' work with students, there must be an understanding of differences that arise from culture, language, family and community (Darling-Hammond, 1997). By increasing teacher knowledge and understanding of ethnic differences and cultural perspectives, this may be possible. As Heath (1986) notes, "academic success depends not on the qualifications or the specific language children know, but on the ways of using language that they know (p. 84).

Although these are the narratives of only one teacher, they provide a striking example of

how this teacher uses narrative to help her students understand context, motivation and still convey the material in a culturally significant way. This is important learning given the current interest and emphasis on narrative for portraying relationships, and multiple perspectives. It is a way of combining cognitive and affective learning into class discussions that affords students the opportunity to identify and examine personal perspectives and values. The opportunity for "imagining the experience and feelings of others [through] story and metaphor provide a form of educational encounter that renders us human and frees the moral imagination" (Witherall, 1991, p. 94). Further research is needed, however, into the importance of narrative for constructing supportive relationships with students in educational settings. If we are to address the challenge of education for all students, we must allow for differences, find ways to construct communities that foster multiple perspectives and paradigms, and create classroom communities that can work effectively together.

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Table 1.

The teacher's narratives for establishing relationships and explicating the content in an English high school class. The teacher uses personal and cultural narratives for creating a context, self-disclosing, questioning and clarifying , and stating her expectations of students.

	CREATES CONTEXT	SELF-DISCLOSES	QUESTIONS & CLARIFIES	STATES EXPECTATIONS
PERSONAL NARRATIVES				
"Exchange Student"	Discusses inappropriate behaviors.	Discloses personal bias and perspective.	Uses as example of studying something new or unfamiliar.	Implicitly states to students, try not to do this.
"Catholic Church"	References the historical context of the church.	Relates her experience and impressions of the Church.	Asks students to "imagine" what that was like?"	Alerts students to future material.
"Canterbury Tales"	Discusses the Doctor. Makes connection to Ben Franklin quotation.	Tells students about her illness and experience, and with recovery.	Makes an analogy to the text to clarify.	Allows for differences in student versus teacher understanding.
CULTURAL NARRATIVES				
"Medieval Literature"	Discusses values in past and present.	Shares that the value of loyalty is important to her.	Encourages students to think of values and applications.	States what she would do & students can use her ideas.
"Get up & Bar the Door"	Frames story in contemporary language, draws analogy to student relationships.	Shares what she thinks and that she can argue either way.	Asks students to reflect about the older couples they know.	Students have their own opinions and express them.
"John Smith"	Discusses context of Virginia society in 1607, the people's values and incongruities.	Shares her knowledge of older couples and how they behave toward one another.	Questions students on their perspectives, beliefs, ideas, & values.	Expects participation. Implies she understands the difficulties of relationships.

Table 2. Teacher's discussion of the "John Smith" narrative in the literature class for emphasizing critical thinking about and understanding of the material. Supports critical literacy and encourages democratic discussions.

"John Smith" Narrative	Synthesis of Discussion	Ethics & Values	Teaching Strategy
Some writers are very biased. John Smith was biased toward himself and against Indians.	Discusses bias and students' awareness. Defines terms	Puritan	Direct Instruction
England was brutal to the punishment of criminals: A child 8 years old would be punished as an adult for stealing a bun ... Ironic because they were savage and brutal ...	Discusses Puritan history. Gives examples. Draws comparison	English Puritan Indian	Inductive Reasoning Perspective-Taking
Is it wrong to steal food if your children are starving? ...	Asks critical questions, students reflect on perspectives & values.	Students'	Guided Discovery Perspective-Taking
They were going to beat [the Puritans] for their beliefs, yet, they left England and continued to do the same things.	Injustice perpetuating injustice.	Puritan	Inductive Reasoning
This guy [John Smith] didn't think much of Indian people, yet, they helped him.	Incongruities. Negative perceptions/Indian generosity.	Puritan Indian	Multiple Representation of Content Characterizations
How did Smith dress? ... How did he see the Native Americans? ... Think about the culture shock! ... Traditional Muslims–women stay behind their husbands–doesn't it set them apart from you?	Examines difference in perceptions based on appearance. Asks students to reflect.	Puritan Indian	Critical Consciousness Critical Literacy Perspective-Taking Deductive Reasoning
Not in a negative sense ... Do people that dress differently than you make you feel uncomfortable?	Relates to students' personal experiences. Asks questions.	Students'	Problem-Posing Social Negotiation

One cannot forget the cultural background that John Smith came from and how unprepared he was for what he found ... Colonists saw the opposite of what they were taught ...	Ties to historical reference. Asks, "Are things always the way they seem?"	Puritan	Critical Literacy Problem-Posing
Loud Indian parties–seemed like gluttony ... But think about it. There were lots of tribes on the move– eating when you could–no preservatives. So eat it while it's there ...	States Puritan philosophy. Asks students to reflect. Relates to Indian experiences.	Puritan Students' Indian	Multiple Representation of Content Critical Literacy Characterizations
When you don't understand something most peoples' reaction is fear, or shock, or terror, or they make fun of it ...	Comments on actions. Teacher infers opinion.	Social	Complex Learning Environment
My discussion of John Smith is more focused on helping you deal with his response. He was from a different place ...	Self-discloses and states opinion.	Personal	Draws Conclusions Critical Consciousness

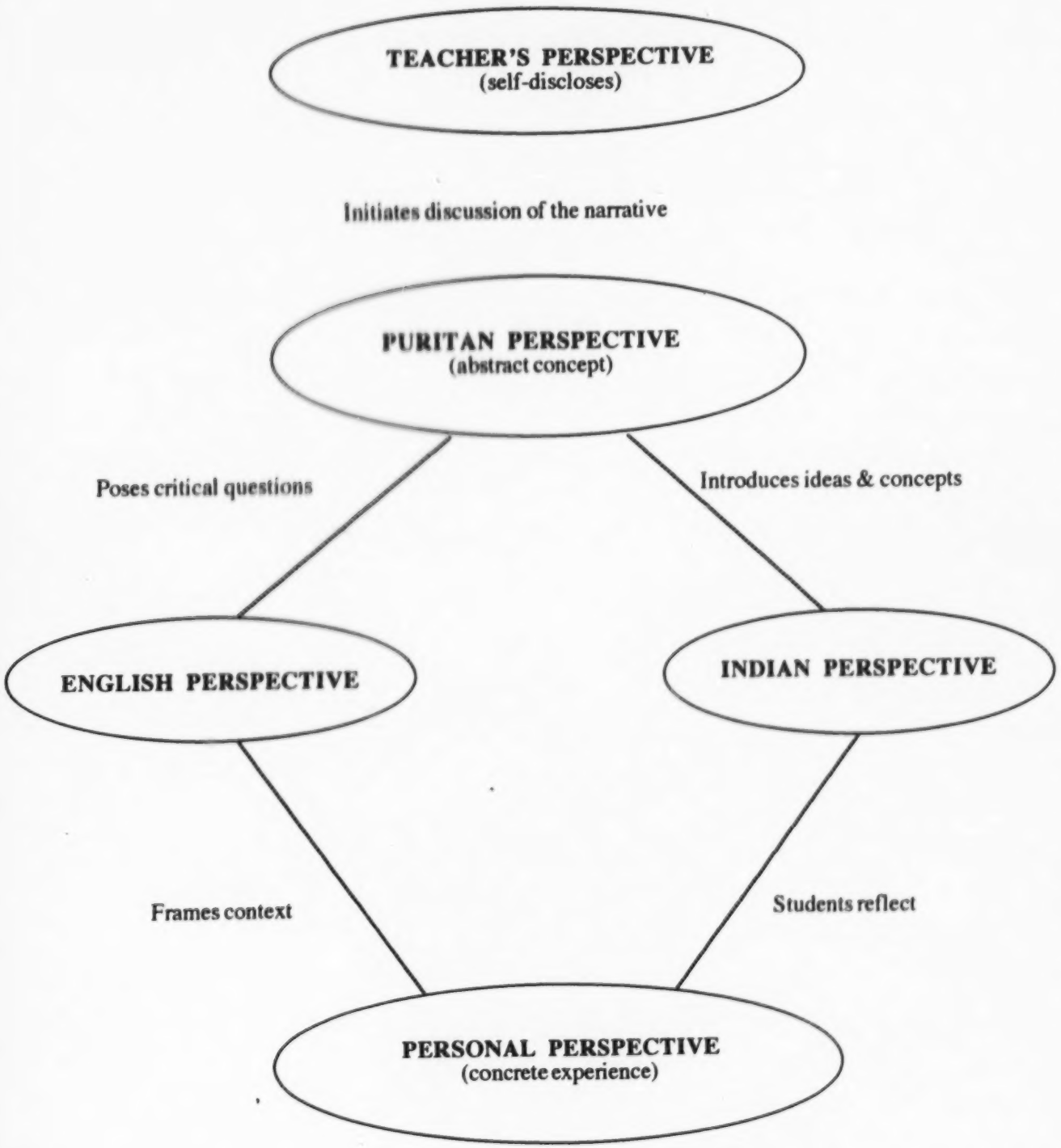

Figure 1.

The Lakota teacher's "John Smith" narrative, and her use of multiple representations of content, perspective-taking, and critical literacy for engaging students in discussion.